

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

**1-14. (cancelled)**

**15. (currently amended)** A genetic construct for the expression of a nucleic acid sequence in plant stomatal guard cells, said construct comprising[[:]] the nucleic acid sequence functionally linked to the promoter of SEQ ID NO: 1, or to a fragment thereof having promoter activity, wherein said promoter fragment contains a sequence selected from the group consisting of: SEQ ID NO: 2, SEQ ID NO: 3, and SEQ ID NO: 4.

**16. (previously presented)** The construct of claim 15, wherein said promoter fragment contains SEQ ID NO: 2.

**17. (previously presented)** The construct of claim 15, wherein said promoter fragment contains SEQ ID NO: 3.

**18. (previously presented)** The construct of claim 15, wherein said promoter fragment contains SEQ ID NO: 4.

19. **(currently amended)** The construct of claim 15, wherein the nucleic acid sequence or ~~the encoded~~ a product encoded by said sequence is ~~are~~ involved in the intracellular signalling pathway modulated by abscisic acid (ABA).

20. **(currently amended)** The construct of claim 19, wherein said nucleic acid sequence contains the coding ~~sequences~~ sequence of ~~Osm1, Rac1, Kat1, Ost1 or Chl1 genes~~ Osm1, Rac1, Kat1, Ost1, or Chl1 gene.

21. **(previously presented)** The construct of claim 19, wherein said nucleic acid sequence codes for an antisense RNA.

22. **(currently amended)** A plant expression vector containing ~~a~~ the genetic construct according to claim 15.

23. **(previously presented)** The vector of claim 22, which is a bacterial plasmid, a bacterial artificial chromosome (BAC), a yeast artificial chromosome (YAC), a viral vector or a vector for Agrobacterium-mediated DNA transfer.

24. **(previously presented)** The vector of claim 22, which is a binary vector for Agrobacterium-mediated DNA transfer.

25. (currently amended) A monocotyledonous or dicotyledonous plant containing a the vector according to claim 22.

26. (currently amended) A method for the expression of a nucleic acid ~~sequences~~ sequence in plant stomatal guard cells, said method comprising introducing into said plant stomatal guard cells the vector according to claim 22.

27. (currently amended) The method according to claim 26, wherein said ~~heterologous~~ sequence is involved in the regulation of stoma aperture/closure.

28. (currently amended) A method for regulating the expression of a nucleic acid sequence ~~sequences~~ in a plant, which comprises introducing in said plant, in a vegetative or reproductive part thereof, a the genetic construct according to claim 15.

29. (currently amended) A monocotyledonous or dicotyledonous plant containing a the construct according to claim 15.

30. **(currently amended)** A method for the expression of a nucleic acid ~~sequences~~ sequence in plant stomatal guard cells, said method comprising introducing into said plant stomatal guard cells a the construct according to claim 15.

31. **(currently amended)** A method for regulating the expression of a nucleic acid ~~sequences~~ sequence in a plant, which comprises introducing in said plant, in a vegetative or reproductive part thereof, a the vector according to claim 22.

32. **(previously presented)** A genetic construct for the expression of a nucleic acid sequence in plant stomatal guard cells, said construct comprising the nucleic acid sequence functionally linked to the promoter of SEQ ID NO: 1.